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# Program

## 2004-2005 Season

Saturday, March 12, 8.00pm

Sunday, March 13, 8.00pm

Sanders Theatre, Cambridge

Christopher Hogwood, conductor

Reverend Professor Peter J. Gomes, narrator

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### ***The Seven Last Words of Jesus Christ***

arr. Christopher Hogwood

Franz Joseph Haydn

(1732-1809)

*Introduzione*

*Pater, dimitte illis, non enim sciunt, quid faciunt.*

*(Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.)*

*Amen dico tibi: hodie mecum eris in paradiso.*

*(Verily I say unto thee, this day thou shalt be with me in Paradise.)*

*Mulier, ecce filius tuus, et tu, ecce mater tua!*

*(Woman, behold thy son, and you, behold thy mother!)*

*Eli, Eli, lama asabthani? (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?)*

*Sitio. (I thirst.)*

*Consumatum est! (It is finished!)*

*Pater! in manus tuas commedo spiritum meum.*

*(Father! Into thine hands I commend my spirit.)*

*Il Terremoto (The Earthquake)*

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The program runs for approximately ninety minutes.

The audience is respectfully asked to turn off all electronic watches, paging devices, and cellular phones during the performance.

The Handel and Haydn Society is funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



# Program Notes

## Haydn: Seven Last Words

By the 1780's, Joseph Haydn was rapidly becoming Europe's most famous living composer. Ironically, Haydn himself scarcely left the Hungarian palace of Esterháza where he was employed. His patron Prince Nicolaus Esterházy kept him very busy with commissions, but allowed him to accept outside projects as

### NOTES IN BRIEF

What you will hear tonight is one of the most unusual pieces of the late eighteenth century: a series of instrumental meditations on the last words of Christ. Haydn was asked to write this work in 1786 for a Good Friday service in Spain, where the movements or "sonatas" would come between a series of short sermons on each of the seven phrases Christ utters on the cross in the various Gospels. Presented with the challenge of composing over an hour of slow movements, Haydn found a way to create a remarkable variety of textures and moods in this work. Each meditation begins with an instrumental statement of the text in question, which Haydn carefully inscribed under the notes of the first violin part. The seven sonatas are framed by an impressively sober *Introduzione* and a closing depiction of the earthquake at Christ's death.

*The Seven Last Words* exist in various incarnations. Along with the original full orchestral version, Haydn's publisher made a version for string quartet and also for solo piano, and Haydn later produced a version for chorus and orchestra. In this performance, you will hear a new arrangement for string orchestra by Christopher Hogwood, incorporating melodic material left out of the traditional string quartet version.

well. The year of 1786 must have been a particularly busy one for Haydn: the Prince expected a new opera, Paris was asking for a series of symphonies for one of their prestigious concert series, the King of Naples wanted a set of nocturnes, and from Cádiz, in southern Spain, came a request for something very unusual. This was to be a set of meditations on the Seven Last Words of Christ, the seven phrases that Christ utters on the Cross as recorded in the various Gospel narratives of the Passion.

This setting was commissioned not by a church but by a confraternity, a lay prayer group that met to recite the rosary and perform other devotional exercises. This group had discovered a cave in Cádiz which seemed ideally remote and austere for their devotions. Being Spanish aristocrats of the eighteenth century, their aesthetic of austerity involved a good deal of marble and neoclassic architecture; by the early 1780's the Grotto of Santa Cuesta had been turned into a very beautiful underground chapel. In the sidebar you can read Haydn's own vivid description of how the chapel was decorated for Good Friday of 1787, when the *Seven Last Words* were first performed. In our concert the short sermons on each "word," or phrase, will be supplied by the distinguished Rev. Professor Peter Gomes, and each sermon, as in Haydn's original conception, will be followed by the ten-minute instrumental meditation on that phrase.





Franz Joseph Haydn

When Haydn was presented with this commission, he found the idea of a series of instrumental commentaries extremely interesting, but was somewhat at a loss how to proceed. Creating over an hour of slow movements with sufficient variety, all somehow illustrating the various phrases Christ utters, was not an easy task. The Abbé Maximilian Stadler, who was a great friend of both Mozart and Haydn, happened to be with Haydn when he received the commission from Spain. He later explained

"[Haydn] asked me what I thought of it all. I answered that it seemed to me advisable that over the words an appropriate melody should be fitted, which afterwards should be performed only by instruments, in which art he was in any case a master."

Haydn took his friend's advice, and even went to the trouble of having each Word printed under the first violin part of the corresponding movement. Haydn's language, of course, is that of the balanced and elegant Classical style, so there is nothing particularly expressionistic in these settings. Haydn uses the speech-rhythms of the Latin texts as points of departure, to suggest musical motifs that will serve as a thread through the work. As the great Haydn scholar Robbins Landon has put it, "the introduction and seven sonatas are the aural equivalents of the paintings and sculptures of rococo Catholic churches, inducing tranquil thought and peace of mind."

We don't know what the reaction of the Spanish congregation was to this highly original form of Good Friday meditation. What we do know is that it rapidly became one of Haydn's most popular compositions. Shortly after publishing the full orchestral version, his Viennese publishers Artaria came out with a domestic version for string quartet, and even (if you couldn't find enough players for a quartet) a version for solo piano. Haydn's music traveled far and wide: by 1805, the piano version had turned up as far away as Mexico City. Later in his life, Haydn collaborated with the Baron van Swieten on an arrangement for chorus and orchestra.

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***[Seven Last Words]* rapidly became one of Haydn's most popular compositions.**

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Today, this work is perhaps most familiar in its incarnation for string quartet, but Artaria's original publication has some puzzling lapses. Thematic material originally given to the winds, for example, is often left out entirely, with the quartet playing only an accompanying figure. Today's performance marks the debut of a new arrangement for string orchestra by Christopher Hogwood, an expansion of the string quartet version with the missing melodies from the wind parts restored to the string texture.

Haydn sets the texts of these "sonatas" (as he calls them) in subtly different ways. After an opening *Introduzione*, full of majestic dotted rhythms and charged, aching intervals, the first sonata illustrates its text with a falling motif for "Pater," a cry that is repeated by the first violins throughout the movement. The second sonata, "Hodie mecum eris in Paradiso," begins with the first violins stating the text, reinforced with a solo cello; the restrained rapture of paradise is well-illustrated by a shift from minor to major. With the third sonata, the phrase "Mulier, ecce filius tuus" (beginning with a falling motif like the first sonata) is heard after three sober E major opening chords.

The fourth sonata, "Deus meus," is set in F minor, a key favored by Haydn for complex and weighty musical discourse. The theme of abandonment is underlined as the orchestra leaves a solo violin to negotiate a series of cadenzas on its own. In the fifth sonata, "Sitio," another bit of word-painting is suggested with the "parched" sound of violins pizzicato. This figure is later taken up by all the strings in anguished fortissimo. The sixth sonata, "Consummatum est," begins with its motto-phrase declaimed by the whole orchestra in a gesture of great finality. Again, as with the second sonata, the music modulates to major in the course of the movement, and ends on a note of consolation.

The last sonata, "In manus tuas," is set in the comforting key of E flat major, with the violins muted. The gentle rhythm of triplets is carried through the movement by the first violins in wide-ranging melodic lines. This last Word ends with delicate pizzicatos, as a few solo strings hold an E flat "sempre più piano," growing ever fainter over several bars. What happens next is a deliberate shock. Haydn closes this work not with a consoling elegy, but with a violent disruption of the contemplative mood. The earthquake described in Matthew 28:2 is a cosmic intervention, revealing how deeply the death of Christ has torn the fabric of the universe, and Haydn responds with a remarkable direction. The orchestra is to play "Presto e con tutta la forza," and the movement closes with a dynamic unprecedented in Haydn: triple forte, or *fortississimo*, as loud as possible.

-Robert Mealy

*Mr. Mealy is the Society's Christopher Hogwood Research Fellow for the 2004-2005 season. A scholar and performer, he has recorded and toured with many period instrument ensembles. Mr. Mealy frequently writes on music, and teaches historical performance at Harvard and Yale.*

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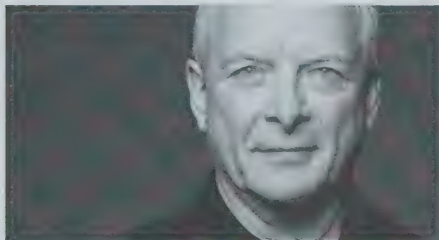
*When Haydn came to publish his choral version of the Seven Last Words in 1801, the preface included Haydn's vivid description of the first performance of the orchestral version:*

Some fifteen years ago I was requested by a canon of Cádiz to compose instrumental music on the seven last words of Our Savior on the Cross. It was customary at the Cathedral of Cádiz to produce an oratorio every year during Lent, and the effect of the performance was very much enhanced by the following circumstances. The walls, windows, and pillars of the church were hung with black cloth, and only one large lamp hanging from the center of the roof broke the solemn darkness. At midday, the doors were closed and the ceremony began. After a short service the bishop ascended the pulpit, pronounced the first of the seven words (or sentences) and delivered a discourse thereon. This ended, he left the pulpit and fell to his knees before the altar. The interval was filled by music. The bishop then in like manner pronounced the second word, *then* the third, and so on, the orchestra following on the conclusion of each discourse. My composition was subject to these conditions, and it was no easy task to compose seven adagios lasting ten minutes each, and to succeed one another without fatiguing the listeners; indeed, I found it quite impossible to confine myself to the appointed limits.



# Artist Profiles

## Christopher Hogwood, conductor



Christopher Hogwood conducts repertoire ranging from the baroque to contemporary, always with the prevailing philosophy of revealing the original sound-world of the composer. Since founding The Academy of Ancient Music in 1973, he has gained international recognition for his performances of baroque and early classical repertoire with period instruments. In addition to his position as Director of The AAM, he continues as Principal Guest

Conductor of the Verdi Orchestra Milan and the Kammerorchester Basel. Other engagements this season include the Joven Orquesta Nacional de España, Orchestra della Toscana, Bamberger Symphoniker, Orchestra Teatro Lirico di Cagliari, Radio-Sinfonie-Orchester Frankfurt, Residentie Orkest, and the Orchestra del Teatro La Fenice. Hogwood has a celebrated catalogue of more than 200 recordings with The AAM for Decca, including the first complete Mozart symphonies on period instruments. The connection between the worlds of musicology and performance is important to Hogwood; with as many as possible of his editorial projects he covers the ground from initial research through to performance or recording. Visit [www.hogwood.org](http://www.hogwood.org) for further information on Christopher Hogwood and his work.

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## Handel and Haydn Society

Celebrating its 190th anniversary season, the Handel and Haydn Society is a leader in historically informed performance, offering programs of music for chorus and orchestra from the Baroque and Classical eras. Under the leadership of Music Director Grant Llewellyn and Conductor Laureate Christopher Hogwood, each Handel and Haydn concert is distinguished by the use of instruments, techniques, and performance styles typical of the period in which it was composed. Recent seasons have highlighted a series of semi-staged operas and programs with dance, including Monteverdi's *Vespers of 1610* and "Ballet Music from the French Court." The Society also has featured the

Boston debut of many rising stars, such as tenor Plácido Domingo and sopranos Dawn Upshaw and Sylvia McNair. Handel and Haydn may be heard nationally on NPR's prestigious *SymphonyCast* program and on numerous recordings, such as the Grammy Award-winning *Lamentations and Praises* and *PEACE*, which debuted last spring at number five on Billboard Magazine's Classical Chart. Now in its 20th year, the Educational Outreach Program gives over 10,000 public school students opportunities to hear and perform classical music and involves children in music-making in meaningful, enjoyable, and lasting ways.

# Reverend Peter J. Gomes, narrator



The Reverend Professor Peter J. Gomes is an American Baptist minister ordained to the Christian Ministry by The First Baptist Church of Plymouth, Massachusetts. Since 1970 he has served in The Memorial Church, Harvard University; and since 1974 as Plummer Professor of Christian Morals and Pusey Minister in The Memorial Church. Widely regarded as one of America's most distinguished preachers, Professor Gomes has fulfilled preaching

and lecturing engagements throughout this country and the British Isle, including the John F. Kennedy School of Government Leadership Conference, the Union Theological Seminary and Presbyterian School of Christian Education in Richmond, Virginia, and Eton College, England, among many others. Named Clergy of the Year in 1998 by Religion in American Life, Professor Gomes participated in the presidential inaugurations of Ronald Wilson Reagan and of George Herbert Walker Bush. His New York Times and national best-selling books, *The Good Book: Reading the Bible with Mind and Heart* and *Sermons: Biblical Wisdom for Daily Living* (1998), were published by William Morrow and Company, Inc. He has also published nine volumes of sermons as well as numerous articles and papers.

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**THE VOCAL APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM** identifies and nurtures young vocal talent, and provides elementary and high school students with a high degree of personalized training. VAP ensembles include Singers (preparatory), Youth Chorus, and Young Women's Chorus (high school) under the direction of Matthew Garrett and Lisa Graham.

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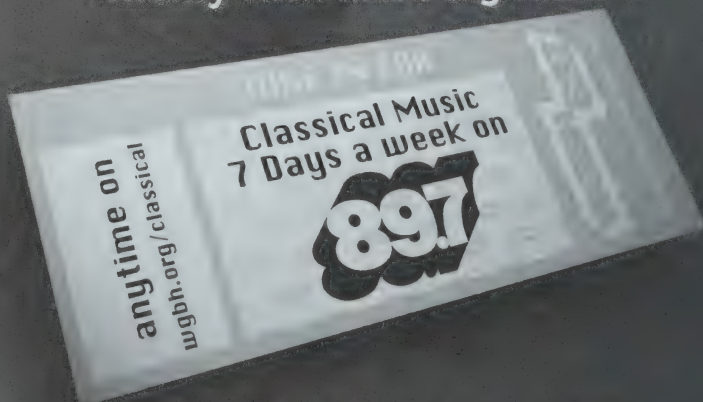
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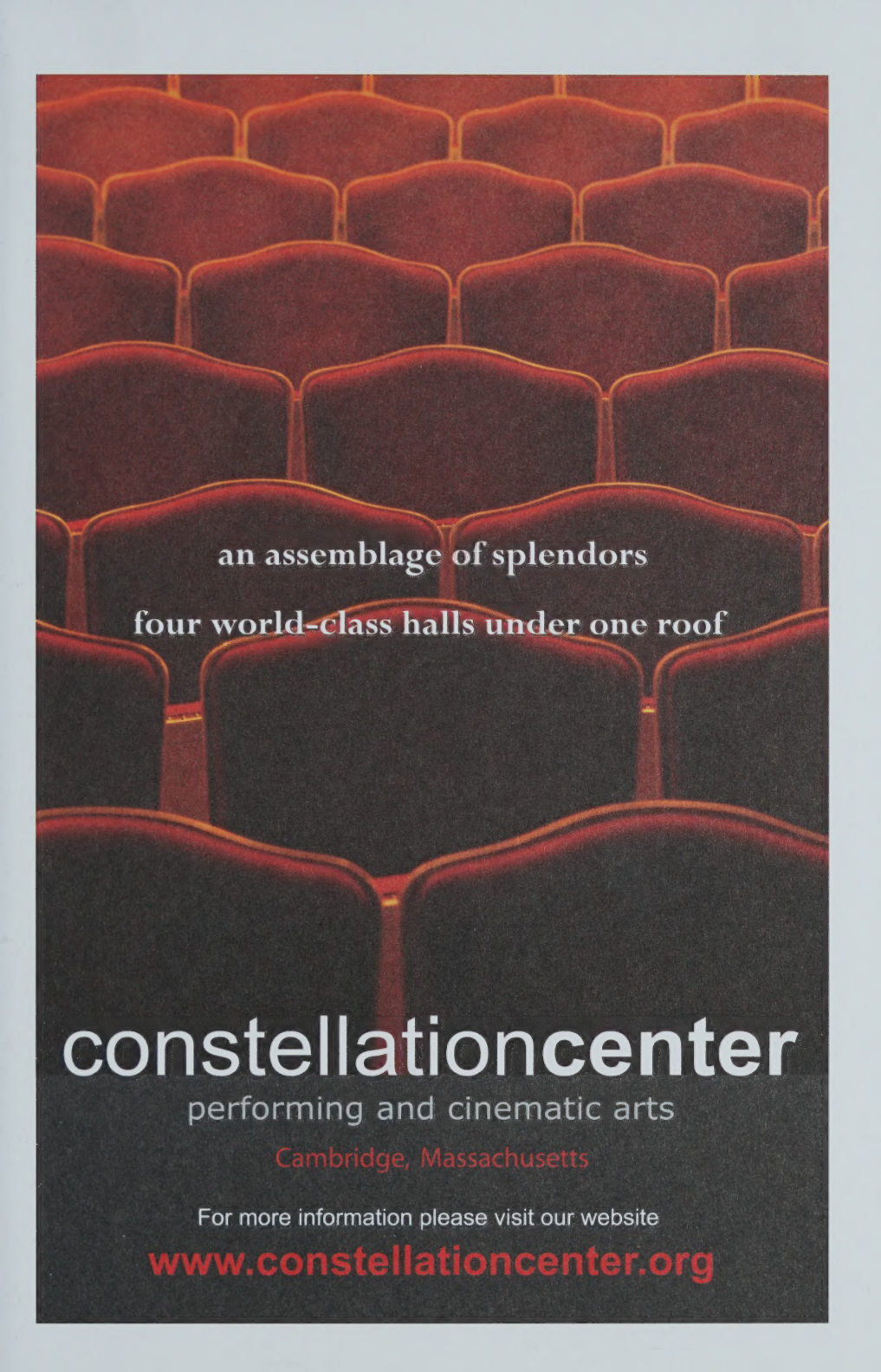
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